

Remarks

Pursuant to the requirement for restriction in the Office Action mailed on December 11, 2003, Applicants hereby elect with traverse Group I, claims 1-11 drawn to a handling, storage and gripping device.

The Office Action also requires election of one of the two species defined in the Office Action. Applicants hereby elect with traverse species A (Figures 2a-5), claims 1-5 and 7-11.

This election is made with traverse based on Applicant's assertion that claims 1-15 satisfy the requirements of unity of invention as a process and an apparatus or means specifically designed for carrying out the process (See 37 C.F.R. §1.475(b)(4) and M.P.E.P., Annex B., Part 1, (e)(ii)). Applicants submit that under PCT Rule 13.4, claim 6 should be examined along with the elected claims because it claims a specific form of the invention claimed in claim 1.

Further examination of all claims 1-15 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: February 11, 2004



Stuart I. Smith
Registration No. 42,159
VENABLE LLP
P.O. Box 34385
Washington, D.C. 20043-9998
Telephone: (202) 344-4683
Facsimile : (202) 344-8300

SIS/elw
DC2/521932